THE STRATEGIC EXPEDITIONARY COMMAND: FILLING THE INTERAGENCY VOID

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ABSTRACT

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The contemporary strategic and operational environments increasingly rely on the full range of interagency participation and management. This is especially important during post-conflict stability, security, transition and reconstruction (SSTR) operations. However, most interagency organizations have no surge capability and respond slowly with the required number of qualified personnel and resources to meet the contingency operational demands. Consequently, military units are forced to use combat forces to assume the functions of interagency departments and nongovernmental organizations. In the recent past, the U.S. military and interagency SSTR efforts have been ad hoc, disjointed, and ineffective with generally overall dismal results. A major cause of the post-conflict breakdown in performing governance tasks is the lack of an adequately trained, equipped, and expertly manned central authority to quickly assume control of reconstruction and transition tasks. Needed is a strategic expeditionary headquarters, manned with trained interagency professionals, easily augmented and deployed to assume the SSTR governance role. This paper proposes a long term organizational solution that accounts for the current operating environment and recommends the transformation of the Standing Joint Force Headquarters into a Strategic Expeditionary

Command structure that provides effective unified command, resources interim interagency capabilities, is modular in concept, and adaptive in function.

THE STRATEGIC EXPEDITIONARY COMMAND: FILLING THE INTERAGENCY VOID

While deploying and conducting counterinsurgency and stability operations in

Afghanistan and Iraq, the US Army is simultaneously transforming into a brigade centric

force that uses modular brigades as capability building-blocks to piece together tailored

force packages to meet a wide range of operational and strategic requirements.   This

modular approach provides remarkable organizational flexibility to address threats along

the full spectrum of operations. Even though the new modular tactical units have

successfully shown their ability to defeat destabilizing groups of insurgents and

terrorists, the stabilization and nation-building process has failed to progress even when

given the time and space generated by these tactical successes. This ineffectiveness is

symptomatic of a lack of synchronization between strategic, operational, and tactical

resources and is clearly exemplified in Iraq where the tactical "surge" resulted in a more

stable security environment, but the overarching strategic nation-building efforts remain

resource starved and disjointed across the interagency. As General David Patraeus,

Commander, Multi-National Force Iraq, indicated in a recent interview:

> You're aware of what the surge has done in security terms, which is really
> pretty significant. In terms of providing a window of opportunity…for the
> political leaders to grapple with some of these issues that are necessary
> for true national reconciliation. They have passed three laws that were
> benchmark laws, if you will: amnesty, provincial powers, and
> accountability and justice. To be sure, you have to see how they are
> implemented. Accountability and justice in particular need to be
> implemented in the spirit of reconciliation that motivated its passage.[1]

What has become evident is that the U.S. national security interagency apparatus

is incapable of effectively conducting nation building operations.[2] In the global

environment of persistent conflict, that is replete with nation building challenges

essential to strategic success, interagency ineffectiveness can be the primary

contributor to strategic failure. Notwithstanding its security and combat focus, the U.S.

military possesses both the surge capacity and adaptability to assume the stability,

transition, reconstruction, and governance roles when the situation requires. The

projected nature of the future strategic and operational environments, resource

constraints, and a U.S. governmental framework that inherently precludes unity of effort

of essential interagency capability and military resources all support the development of

a strategic expeditionary command to best synchronize and perform nation building

functions.

The Military and Nation Building

The United States military's primary and historical focus is on fighting and winning

the nation's wars. Within the United States, the military's involvement in politics and

governance is limited by both law and the military culture. U.S. law prohibits the U.S.

military from training foreign civilian police and requires the use of U.S. civil law-

enforcement professionals to serve as role models for indigenous police in an emerging

democracy.[3] Additionally, the aversion to nation building tasks permeates the military

psyche and influences its ability to perform these missions even outside the U.S.[4]

Similarly, military civil affairs organizations that are specifically designed for nation

building and stability, security, transition, and reconstruction (SSTR) tasks are mainly

relegated to the reserve component, are under-resourced and are ill-equipped and few

in number.[5] Likewise, training requirements to achieve the required readiness for active

and reserve component (RC) units designed for conventional combat operations usually

consumes all the available time and resources and prevents their ability to rapidly and

effectively assume post-conflict tasks.[6] Thus, despite more recent efforts to place

preparation for SSTR operations on an equal footing with those required for combat operations[7] and considerable efforts to re-structure the force to accomplish the SSTR missions,[8] there remain significant organizational, institutional and cultural impediments.[9] Consequently, for nearly every recent conflict the U.S. has participated, nation building is usually approached in an ad hoc manner with military units ill-prepared and reluctant to assume these roles.[10]

Despite its organizational and training focus on conventional combat operations, the U.S. military is increasingly faced with strategic engagements that require SSTR competencies. There are several causes for this trend. First, the cost of developing and maintaining a conventional force that can compete with the United States is prohibitive; even for long term potential peer-competitors. Thus, future threats will likely focus on U.S. niche vulnerabilities: exploiting our weaknesses and avoiding our strengths. Correspondingly, the US has demonstrated in both Iraq and Afghanistan certain vulnerabilities in conducting irregular warfare and performing SSTR missions. Future threats will likely continue to pursue these kinds of engagements as they seek to counter U.S. influence and simultaneously pursue their own interests. Secondly, as globalization trends continue, threats are migrating from nation-state potentates and provocative actors to non-state and transnational threats. Additionally, as the nature of wealth shifts from resource-centric to information and service sectors and coordinated UN sanctions effectively punish acts of overt aggression, conventional wars by nation-state actors over territory and resources become much less desirable. What emerge are conflicts based upon religious, ethnic and ideological concerns focused primarily on the non-state related objectives. These conflicts are traditionally waged by irregular threats

using unconventional tactics and highly adaptable strategies. Likewise, insurgent tactics

are appealing to both state and non-state actors wishing to harm the U.S.[11] Thus, it is

important that the U.S. not only addresses emergent vulnerabilities but also establishes

a flexible and adaptable organizational structure able to integrate and synchronize the

elements of power across all potential domains of future conflict. Strategic success will

depend more on the flexibility and adaptability of the U.S. organizational capabilities

rather than on developing any single response to a near term vulnerability exploited by

our current enemies. A flexible and adaptable command and control expeditionary

organizational headquarters, modularly designed to be tailored for strategic interagency

coordination and unified direction could effectively respond to threats across the

spectrum of conflict. In these situations, American conventional military power will

quickly destroy an organized threat, but U.S. forces will also be able to transition quickly

into stability operations.[12] Surprisingly, it is our difficulty in responding to current SSTR

mission requirements that can provide the impetus for developing an organizational

solution that will itself improve our ability to respond to the full spectrum of potential

threats.

An effective expeditionary command headquarters would consist of a unified

formation made up of the lead ground component headquarters and augmented by a re-

designed Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) with personnel trained in those

skill sets required to initiate the critical and essential tasks in the post-conflict mission

set. Because this element will be responsible for the critical transition period between

ground combat operations and SSTR operations, it will have a strategic organizational

focus including reach back capability, interagency manning, and coalition command authority.

The development of capable and credible host-nation political and economic institutions denies terrorists the ungoverned spaces they need to survive and develop. In recent conflicts, the U.S. government has looked to non-DOD agencies for this expertise, and there are efforts underway to improve both capacity and capability for stabilization and reconstruction tasks in the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). However, these organizations have historically been unable to rapidly respond with adequate numbers of personnel and other resources to perform the SSTR missions. Thus, the military eventually assumes these roles and with a resultant convoluted and hybrid civilian-military governance framework.[13] The answer to this post-conflict governance void is not multiple command structures that complicate the decision making process or bureaucratic organizations with limited scope and operational agendas. The answer to the interagency void and the need to control post-conflict actions is what this paper proposes as a Strategic Expeditionary Command.

Historic Perspectives: Trends in Post-conflict Operations

Arguably, the objective "end state" of successful reconstruction efforts would be the long-term establishment of democratic institutions within the foreign society. Using this as a measure of success, the record of past U.S. experience in democratic nation building is dismal. In fact, democracy has been sustained for ten years or longer in only four of sixteen nations where the U.S. has attempted reconstruction.[14] Even more foreboding is that not one American-supported surrogate regime has successfully made

the transition to democracy.[15] Recent U.S. military operations provide useful examples of the challenges encountered in post-conflict operations and offer some insightful trends.

Panama

Operations in Panama resulting in the overthrow of the Noriega regime serve as an example of the application of quick, decisive military force and sluggish post-conflict transition. As General Noriega seized control of Panama by annulling the May 1989 election and became overtly hostile towards Americans, the U.S. conducted Operation NIMROD DANCER as a show of force to demonstrate American resolve in the region. When Noriega failed to comply with U.S. demands, the U.S. executed Operation JUST CAUSE resulting in the overthrow of the Noriega regime.[16] American military planners focused primarily on the decisive operation leaving the post-conflict phase, Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, largely unplanned and under resourced. A clear example of this lack of planning can be seen in the tasks assigned to the Military Police (MP) Battalion that was responsible for operating a detention facility, providing convoy security, and restoring law and order. The MP unit was quickly overcome by these requirements.[17] As law and order waned, looting and vandalism became rampant. American forces were caught up in the resulting chaos. Aggravating the situation was a lack of civil affairs and engineer units to facilitate the rebuilding effort. Furthermore, the interagency was left out of planning efforts and the embassy was understaffed.[18] Afterwards, senior commanders reflected on the lack of post-conflict planning and looked to the Army for improving future operations. Fortunately, the reconstruction efforts were eventually

enabled by the efforts of the U.S. Military Support Group which only took a year to repair the combat damage and rebuild Panama.

Haiti

The U.S. watched in September of 1991 as President Aristide was overthrown by General Cedras. In April of 1993, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed contingency planning for possible operations in Haiti and the planning intensified in October of that year after protestors denied UN peacekeepers entry into Port Au Prince. The international community put pressure on Haitian military leaders while the U.S. made plans to invade. In response to the growing tension, the Haitian government reinstated President Aristide in September 1994 as American military forces began deploying.[19] With an American invasion looming, General Cedras began serious negotiations with U.S. diplomats. For this operation, U.S. military leaders had more than sufficient time to plan the invasion while applying lessons learned from operations in Panama and Somalia as the crisis took several years to develop. In planning the invasion of Haiti, the DoD coordinated closely with the interagency and developed and used the "Interagency Checklist for Restoration of Essential Services" and placed the USAID in the lead. However, U.S. military units remained the primary resource for performing many of the restoration activities including public administration, information services, police force training, refugee care, infrastructure protection, and security operations.[20] While military units wrestled with the legalities of performing "nation-building" tasks, other U.S. governmental agencies were slow to respond. Consequently, the deployed U.S. military forces had to perform these non-DoD roles, missions and functions that are more appropriate for its other interagency partners.[21]

The expanding nation-building tasks exposed shortcomings in military units sent to perform the rebuilding tasks. For example, civil affairs units composed of small teams had to be augmented by other organizations while engineer units lacked sufficient equipment and personnel to conduct reconstruction missions. These shortcomings required Soldiers to develop tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for the assigned nation-building tasks and include them as part of their mission essential task lists.[22] Even though U.S. military units struggled with these challenges, they were able to achieve a stable enough environment to allow the military to transfer those responsibilities to civil agencies and re-deploy to the U.S. by April 1996. Unfortunately, the situation in Haiti deteriorated to pre-invasion conditions within several years of the military withdrawal. Two key lessons came out of this experience: first, withdrawal of military forces should be conditions-based using established measures of effectiveness; second, civilian agencies assuming the lead in nation-building efforts must be capable of at least sustaining, and ideally improving on, those conditions.[23]

The Balkans

U.S. operations in the Balkans reflect changes in force and mission requirements during the post-conflict phase. The U.S. Army found itself once again providing security to enforce the rule of law and manning detention centers while augmenting the UN-NATO justice system in Kosovo with teams of Army lawyers.[24] In Bosnia, a more secure environment allowed the military to quickly transition to nation-building tasks and reinforced the importance of immediately accomplishing these tasks in facilitating the transition towards civilian implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace.[25] Furthermore, as a peacekeeping force, the Army found that it needed fewer

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combat troops and more engineers, military police, and civil affairs personnel. This, in turn, created challenges for the Reserve Components to meet the force requirements and technically skilled personnel augmentation demands.[26] Notwithstanding, significant civilian SSTR activities, American military forces remain in the Balkans today while the civilian political process continues to develop in those nation states.

Resulting Trends. A critical review of U.S. military operations prior to Afghanistan and Iraq reveals the following commonalities:

- The U.S. military inadequately plans for post-conflict operations.

- Non-DoD interagency resources and capabilities are limited.

- Invasion force mission requirements vary dramatically depending upon the situation.

- Post-conflict operations require unique resources not normally found in combat units.

- An effective command element is essential to immediately establishing overall governance and managing the resources to successfully transition from combat to post-conflict operations.

The Many Commands of the Iraqi Theater of Operation

A soldier arriving into Iraq as part of a rotational unit soon learns that there is a higher headquarters for seemingly every aspect of the post-conflict environment. The burgeoning state of command entities is a direct result of a failure to address the above five historical trends. The solution is to comprehensively re-examine and re-design the command structure so that SSTR operations can be effectively planned, executed, and

managed while efficiently allocating the resources and tasks to accomplish the broad scope of post-conflict requirements.

Initially, a Joint Force headquarters commanded the coalition forces made up primarily of U.S. combat units sent in to defeat the Iraqi army and overthrow Saddam Hussein. There is no doubt that these combat units performed remarkably in defeating the Iraqi forces and deposing Saddam in a matter of weeks. However, when the combat operations ended, the resulting void in Iraqi governance led to uncontrolled lawlessness across the country. Concurrently, the coalition forces failed to act to establish order and stop the looting. The resulting anarchy caused the almost compete destruction of every unguarded public facility. How did the operational void occur?

The senior commander, General Tommy Franks, was told by the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, that the primary goal was regime change and having accomplished that, the people of Iraq would embrace American soldiers as liberators and begin the rebuilding process with support from the international community and the U.S. interagency. The U.S. government made the assumption that existing Iraqi governance and associated institutions would remain in place, even as we replaced the regime.[27] Given this direction, military planners under Franks glossed over the post-conflict phase of the operation leaving soldiers on the ground with little guidance as to their role in enforcing the law and stopping the looting. They believed that the police force was both capable and would return to their stations following the invasions and that the ministries would continue to function under a lower echelon cadre of highly professional bureaucrats. [28] Correspondingly, the higher echelon leadership was to be provided by Ahmed Chalabi, Iyad Alawi and a group of other exiles that had been

collected for this purpose.[29] Moreover, they never foresaw the possibility for a

determined and well-manned insurgency.[30] Finally, senior planners did not anticipate

the impact of decisions to immediately disband the entire Iraqi military and remove

senior members of the Ba'ath Party from all government positions.[31] General Franks

attempted to coordinate with the interagency but found the person responsible at the

Pentagon for interagency actions, Mr. Douglas Feith to be, in Franks' opinion,

incompetent.[32] Even with this acknowledged lack of confidence in interagency

leadership, Franks and his staff focused on the decisive military operations while

assuming away detailed planning for making the inevitable transition from combat to

governance and peace-keeping.

> When assumptions are wrong, everything built on them is undermined. Because the Pentagon assumed that U.S. troops would be greeted as liberators and that an Iraqi government would be stood up quickly, it didn't plan seriously for less rosy scenarios. Because it so underestimated the task at hand, it didn't' send a well-trained, coherent team of professionals…the U.S. occupation authorities would prove unable to adjust their stance quickly when assumptions proved wrong. Because of that incompetence, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) would be unable to provide basic services such as electricity, clean water, and security to the Iraqi population…[33]

One can argue that the lack of planning for post-conflict operations eventually led

to the incremental development of a military command structure with multiple

headquarters to address the unexpected problems of nation-building. Currently in Iraq,

there are three major command elements. The Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I)

headquarters coordinates interagency, host nation, and coalition efforts at the strategic

level. At the operational level, Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) headquarters is

responsible for the planning and execution of SSTR missions. Finally, the Multi-National

Security and Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) trains and equips the Iraqi Security

Forces. These primary command elements create an entangled bureaucratic process that is often inefficient and confusing. Furthermore, these organizations continue to undergo changes in structure and purpose, as resources and the operating environment change over time. Perhaps the creation of these multiple commands was a direct result of military leaders reacting to criticism from politicians. The apparent response to this criticism was to create a more diluted and increasingly ineffective bureaucracy while simultaneously suffering mounting combat casualties. The military appeared to be "a shaken institution, losing good people and provoking others to question it as it hadn't been in decades."[34] Whatever the reason, there continues to exist a lack of continuity as these headquarters elements are filled in an ad hoc manner with available personnel from a wide range of organizations including U.S. military units, coalition partners, private contractors, and Iraqi civilian and military personnel. Put in layman's terms, we are rebuilding a nation with what is essentially a multi-layered, "pick-up team."

The Epiphany: A Strategic Expeditionary Command

Unity of command remains a relevant strategic tenant and, therefore, must be addressed in the Army's current transformation process. For years, senior military leaders have known that "the realities of the post-Cold War security environment have caused all of the military services to reexamine how their forces are organized, equipped, and trained to meet the new challenges."[35] However, even with this awareness, the Army focus is on organizing, training, and equipping its modular combat brigades without giving the same analytical attention to the design and functions of command structure responsible for leading these "transformed" units.

An expeditionary command headquarters could be organized, trained, and equipped to meet the challenges of an operational environment endemic to "persistent conflict." "Pitting a traditional combined armed force trained and equipped to defeat similar military organizations against insurgents reminds one of a pile driver attempting to crush a fly, indefatigably persisting in repeating its efforts."[36] Conversely, a command headquarters, manned, equipped and designed for expansion and modularly augmented based upon the particular strategic environment could adroitly perform post-conflict governance roles, missions and functions. Since its primary mission set will be driven by SSTR tasks, the commander and staff will know that planning for post-conflict operations is critical to their success.

> In light of the increased need to perform this additional complex coordination between civilian and armed forces agencies, a specific unit, with a designated task to conduct peacekeeping operations needs to be established. To integrate security forces, the United States should mandate the establishment of a bipartisan commission reporting to Congress and supported by the Defense, State, and Justice Departments to examine the feasibility of organizing a U.S. or international integrated security force for use in post-conflict reconstruction.[37]

An expeditionary command requires a robust planning staff as an integral part of its structure. Included in the integrated planning team should be personnel with the resident skill sets identified to plan in detail, the critical reconstruction tasks.[38] Military police, engineer, civil affairs, legal, and other interagency planners integrated into a standing operational planning group could provide the expertise in those functional areas that have repeatedly proven to be the most often overlooked aspects of post-conflict operations.

Generally, interagency resources are limited and slow to mobilize in a crisis situation. As clearly illustrated in the above case studies, senior military leaders have

found themselves in the difficult position of using immediately available military combat forces to meet the emerging civil SSTR operational demands following the cessation of major combat operations and were ill-prepared to synchronize and manage those efforts.[39] The planning preparations leading up to the U.S. response to OIF provides some insights into the governance planning challenge and corresponding framework for a Strategic Expeditionary Command.

In response to growing concerns about the post-conflict planning effort for Iraq, military leaders, under the direction of the Secretary of Defense, organized and stood up several organizations to plan the rebuilding efforts. The first group to take on the interagency planning void came out of the Central Command (CENTCOM) staff. This headquarters had just planned and executed operations in Afghanistan and developed two separate plans for the invasion of Iraq. However, CENTCOM and Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) staff planners were focused on the continued revision of the Phase III maneuver plan based upon the Secretary of Defense's incremental approval of the deployment force packages. Notwithstanding the recognition that during WW II the Allies had planned for the occupation of Germany over a three year period, CENTCOM planners and Washington focused on planning for the maneuver war, and far less effort went into planning for the peace.[40] Consequently, the Pentagon called upon retired Army Lieutenant General Garner to head the post war effort. The U.S. and its Coalition partners chose to administer Iraq through the procedures of a civilian-led organization, and announced the formation of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), to be led by Garner.[41] Even though he was arguably the best qualified and likely the most available for this job, he

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and his team had only two months to pull together a comprehensive plan – and it turned out to be too little, too late.[42] Garner's team struggled for several weeks with organizational problems and staffing deficiencies and made little progress. The quick transition to a civil authority (ORHA) that was clearly under-resourced and forced to operate in an increasingly deteriorating security environment was a recipe for failure. Consequently, after only one month and indicative of the expanding challenges in the administration of Iraq, ORHA and Garner were replaced by a new organization called the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), under the leadership of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III. The CPA under Bremer was only marginally more effective, and continued the bifurcated and muddled governance (military and civilian control) in the face of a growing insurgency.[43]

A more logical approach for achieving unity of effort would have been to establish interagency relationships before the conflict began through appropriate staff planning, coordination, and interactions during exercises and then maintain those relationships between civilian agencies and the military up to and through deployment. A suitable post-conflict force structure could be established by several means. First, the U.S. can leverage coalition partners with capable units to conduct the mission tasks. Second, the U.S. can reorganize and retrain traditional combat forces to conduct occupation duties. Finally, the U.S. can maintain forces (headquarters) specifically designed for post-conflict operations.[44] Given these options, the Army can establish a fully integrated command structure designed to meet the challenges of post-conflict operations.

Specifically, major agencies including, the USAID, Department of State, Department of Justice, and the Department of Defense, could assign liaison

representatives to the strategic expeditionary command. These full-time liaison

representatives would be responsible for the planning and coordination of interagency

resources and functions with their military counterparts. These liaison assignments

would provide long term continuity between civilian agencies and the military

expeditionary command and serve as an important bridge for "reach back" expertise

and associated agency resources when deployed.

Similarly, a permanently established and manned cross-agency headquarters

allows for ongoing contingency planning and coordination as well as facilitates the

development of processes and procedures through daily operations and periodic

exercises. Routine planning and coordination activities help establish cohesion and

teamwork while building a multi-agency contingency response culture. Likewise,

connectivity with parent agencies allows for open lines of communication that helps

facilitate agreements on priorities and prevents wasted or duplicative efforts. Moreover,

the selection and subsequent deployment of the key agency representatives would

mostly be pre-determined and thus avoid bureaucratic squabbles regarding short-notice

staffing assignments. For instance, as Garner briefed Rumsfeld before heading to

Kuwait, he became aware that the Defense Secretary felt like there were too many

outsiders, too many State Department types.[45]

> Rumsfeld was replicating in microcosm with Garner nit-picking he had
> done with Franks over the war plan. There the numbers had been tens of
> thousands, but here the issue was just a few dozen people. Garner said it
> was simply too late to rejigger the staff. Instead, Rumsfeld exacted a
> promise that on the long plane ride to Kuwait, Garner would review his
> roster and see if any last-minute substitutions could be made.[46]

It is very difficult for any group of military planners to imagine all possible

likelihoods of any operation, but it is even more difficult to achieve this level of analysis

when all are looking through the same lens. A dedicated interagency liaison staff would provide the expeditionary command the expertise to consider options and challenges as also viewed from the civilian agency perspective and the internal knowledge base to comply with and use appropriate agency processes and procedures for obtaining those resources critical to accomplishing SSTR tasks.

As the operational environment changes, force and missions requirements will change. The expeditionary command, having clear responsibility for planning post-conflict operations, could best respond to those changes and consider and optimize each agencies' contribution. This awareness would put the expeditionary command in a pro-active, almost anticipatory posture while military operations transition from combat to reconstruction. Unexpected conditions put soldiers and commanders in a reactionary mode that often remains ineffective in resolving given situations. Effective governance requires a combination of consistency, continuity and adaptability. All of these would be aided by an interagency trained and integrated staff.[47]

In 2004, Secretary Rumsfeld reported that, "Three years ago we took steps to create permanent joint headquarters for each of our combatant commanders worldwide. These headquarters are being equipped with the most capable command, control, computers, communications, intelligence, and surveillance assets we have available."[48] He went on to report that, "the JCS established performance standards and management criteria for these new organizations."[49] Obviously, DoD recognized the need for a command element to meet the needs of the future joint force. In fact, in his report to Congress, Rumsfeld reported that all combatant commands were scheduled to have a Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) by 2005.[50] Although the SJFHQ

remains to be stood up in several combatant commands, the attempt to leverage joint

capabilities through a standing joint force headquarters, manned at a skeletal level but

trained in the appropriate joint processes, fills a critical void for effective joint operations.

Likewise, the SJFHQ provides a useful template for the conceptual development

of the strategic expeditionary command. However, it must be resourced to fill the

interagency military-civilian planning and management void for the critical transition to

post-conflict operations. The SJFHQ would be designed to fall in on and augment the

ground component headquarters in order to enable the formation of a Strategic

Expeditionary Command. The existing SJFHQ, could be reorganized and be designed

to subsume modular-like expansion packages depending upon the contingency

requirements. The SJFHQ base organization would consist of the existing core SJFHQ

military staff but be significantly augmented with interagency liaison officers (as outlined

above). The core staff could also be expanded by reserve component drilling individual

mobilization augmentees (DIMAs) who could conduct weekend drills and Annual

Training (AT) periods with the headquarters. The expeditionary headquarters could

also incorporate a Civil Military Operations Center drawn from one of the four Civil

Affairs Commands (CACOMs). Correspondingly, interagency liaison cells could be

augmented using pre-designated personnel from agency parent staffs who could attend

periodic training and planning sessions to get familiar with staff procedures and

contingency plans. Additionally, cell augmentation could occur by implementing, on a

small scale, President Bush's proposed concept for a Civilian Reserve Corps (CRC).

This program promises to provide a pool of expert civilian reserve manpower similar to

the military's DIMA approach. Its initial use in the SJFHQ could also help refine this

largely undefined but potentially rich resource for improving overall SSTR response capability.[51] The goal would be to develop a strategic expeditionary command that is organized, trained and equipped to overcome the recurring trends in U.S. military SSTR operations. The resulting product would be a fully integrated, unified staff that is expeditionary in nature and capable of performing those command functions required to effectively secure and employ interagency resources, leverage joint capabilities, plan for and anticipate a dynamic, complex operational environment, and provides continuity and unity of effort.

Conclusion

The operating environment of the future is described by the U.S. Army War College as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). With all of these characteristics complicating military planning and execution, why create additional confusion by overlaying that environment with a bureaucratic, multi-layered, ad-hoc, command organization that exacerbates the VUCA environment? Recent military contingency operations reveal systemic flaws in our command and management approach to post-hostility SSTR operations. The Strategic Expeditionary Command takes the SJFHQ beyond its initial charter by integrating in a deliberate manner interagency planning and execution of SSTR operations. This re-organized headquarters could be resourced using a combination of active and reserve military senior planners and full time interagency liaison representatives and potential civilian reserve corps augmentees.

The Army is faced with a systemic and endemic problem when performing SSTR operations. Transitioning from successful combat operations to SSTR operations

requires an agile, interagency-capable command structure. In most cases, the strategic

and operational environments demand an immediate and seamless transition to SSTR

governance activities from the very highest levels down to the local/tactical level. To

accomplish this, the nation needs to establish an expeditionary command structure,

manned with appropriate military and interagency representatives, continually planning,

coordinating and exercising while developing interagency processes and procedures

that will facilitate actual SSTR operations. When called upon to deploy, this Strategic

Expeditionary Command will serve both the host country and our Nation and overcome

our historic post-conflict challenges.

<u>Endnotes</u>

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